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II-C-3 Additional arrangements for strategic warning

1. Arrangements for strategic warning, as well as for other categories of warning, should be based on a clear understanding that this is a line responsibility shared by all NFIB production offices. A small interagency strategic warning staff should function as a backup and supplement to line responsibility, not as the sole authority for strategic warning. Its mission should be focused on long-range research and analysis directed toward providing a greater margin of insurance and safeguard against strategic surprise.

2. This mechanism should have the right and responsibility to take the lead in drawing community attention to developments of potential strategic warning significance. Beyond this alerting function, the strategic warning mechanism should be authorized, in cooperation with the appropriate NIO, to prepare warning assessments that would serve as catalysts for broader community examination and judgment. This mechanism should not be involved in day-to-day I&W activities, which should remain the responsibility of such line elements as DIA's Alert Center, WISP, CIA's Operations Center, and current intelligence offices. The strategic warning function should not duplicate the daily, routine process of examining, evaluating, and reporting force postures, military exercises, normal deployments, etc. Warning personnel, moreover, should not be directly involved in crisis management, although they would contribute warning assessments to crisis task forces.

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3. The present definition of strategic warning under DCID 1/5 should be broadened to include (a) political confrontations between the major Communist powers (the USSR, Warsaw Pact, China, and North Korea), and the US and its allies; and (b) small "W" situations involving a potential for escalation into strategic warning situations. The strategic warning group would work closely with whatever mechanism is established to cover other categories of small "W" -- a parallel warning staff, responsible NIOs, etc.

4. This distinction between major warning developments that involve a potential for political or military confrontation between the major Communist powers and the US, on the one hand, and other developments which do not carry immediate dangers of such confrontation, on the other, would meet the DoD's primary interest in warning activities related to Big "W." The strategic warning group would function in close association with DIA's Vice Director for Production.

5. The strategic warning group would report either to a Special Assistant to the DCJ, the Director of NFAC, or the DDCI. Community responsibility could be symbolized by and centered in a high-level interagency warning committee which would oversee the group's operations and advise the senior warning authority. This committee would not have regular weekly meetings but would convene at the direction of the senior warning authority to examine specific developments and oversee the community's response -- in the form of an Alert Memorandum or a Strategic Warning Notice.

6. Other options for handling the strategic warning function might include:

A. Dropping the distinction between Big W and Small W and vesting the entire warning mission in an expanded SWS, which could either operate

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as a single warning mechanism or be subdivided into two units -- one for Big W and the second for all other categories.

B. Appointing a national intelligence officer for warning who would supervise the separate warning mechanism, provide guidance and oversight for the I&W functions and responsibilities of line production offices, and advise the DCI, DDCI, the Director of NFAC, and the NIOs on all matters pertaining to warning.

C. Continuing the present arrangement under DCID 1/5, but with a broader Big W mission for the Special Assistant and SWS as described in paragraph 3, and with the NIOs responsible for other small "W" coverage.

Dissemination

7. Alert Memoranda or Strategic Warning Notices would be issued to the DCI and passed, at his discretion, to the President and the NSC. Other reports and studies prepared by the warning staff would continue to be disseminated to the Washington policy and intelligence communities and to the major U & S Commands.

Collection Tasking

8. The strategic warning function should not have a separate tasking system but should form an integral part of the total warning tasking system. The warning group would maintain constant contact with the NITO for warning; any collection requirements not satisfied through line production offices and Alert Centers would be presented to the NITO for warning.

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